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S. G. and E. L. ELBERT

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No

KATHARINE E. COMAN



SPEECH

OF

H. M. BRACKENRIDGE,

DELIVERED IN THE

Young Men's Convention,

SEPTEMBER, 1838.

PITTSBURGH:

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1838.

THE

NEW

AMERICAN

AND

YOUNG MEN'S

ASSOCIATION

OF

THE

SPEECH.

Fellow Citizens, Delegates of Pennsylvania—

Yes, fellow citizens, I address you, as the representatives of Pennsylvania, and not as the representatives of a party in the State. I see before me men from every county, township, town and city, of Pennsylvania, and men whose intelligence and respectability satisfy me that mind meets mind, and heart meets heart, animated with one sentiment, one resolution, for the rights and honor of our State, first of all; and next for the maintenance of our federal Constitution in its true spirit and within its true bounds, as the best security for our prosperity and happiness. I see before me in the many thousands who compose this assembly, a number equal to that of the democracy of Athens, over whose heads Demosthenes rolled the thunders of his eloquence; would that I had the voice of a trumpet, and the thoughts of an angel, that I might speak in a manner worthy of the occasion!

There are times, fellow citizens, when States and Nations should awaken; and where in such extremity there is no other remedy, it will be sought through the terrible convulsions of a revolution.—Thank God, no such occasion yet exists in this favored country. I am not one of those who deprecate the existence of party as an absolute evil; it is in some measure necessary to the purity and health of our free institutions. But there are periods when the State, the nation itself, must arise, put an end for the time to party, in order to restore the Constitution to its purity, where it has been practically overturned by the corruptions of its administration. The opposing numbers arrayed against this rising of the people in their majesty, ceases to merit the name of a party; it becomes a faction, which in the course of things must be scattered and dissolved. That there is at this moment such a necessity, and such a rising, must be clearly manifest. When I survey this vast assemblage of chosen, intelligent, respectable, virtuous citizens, representing in their primitive capacity a million of people, who, if it were possible, would be present themselves—when I see the indications of popular rising in almost every state of the Union, I cannot doubt the fact of such a necessity. Men of Pennsylvania, this is no slight rippling on the surface of the waters—the mighty billows of the ocean itself have been lifted up before the coming storm.

Although professedly a Convention of the young men of Pennsylvania, you have received among you many of the elder citizens, so as to combine the advantages of age for counsel and of youth for action. To you, young men of Pennsylvania, the duty must be especially assigned, to rescue the ark from the hands of the Philistines; to place it in safety, and to guard it as the most sacred charge in future. Untrammelled by the prejudices, pride or interests of mere party, you are moved only by the pure love of country, and the generous desire to emulate the deeds of your sires, by whom its liber-

The array of freemen of Pennsylvania, over which I pass my eye with the swelling pride I cannot but feel as an American citizen and Pennsylvanian, is indeed most encouraging, most cheering. I may safely say that nothing equal to it has ever been witnessed in this State, and nothing superior in the Union. I will not be so illiberal as to deny that there will be many worthy and respectable citizens in the projected Convention in this city, on next Monday; but I trust that before October the greater part of them will be found with us—that they will leave the faction which does not rise to the dignity of a party—that they will leave the faction, and join the standard of their country. 'Your Convention,' said one of them to me, 'is certainly very respectable, but wait until Monday, and then you will see a *show*.' Most unlucky expression, and most true! The age of humbugs, of deceptions and impostures is not yet passed. The office holders of the general government and their numerous dependants and retainers, drummed up by their mercenary hireling presses, will leave nothing untried to make up a *show*, but it will be like the show sometimes seen at the theatre, where its retainers and its actors with a crowd engaged for the occasion, are marched across the stage to represent the grand army of Alexander the Great! No, fellow citizens, it will not be the people, it will not be the real democracy of Pennsylvania. I have now before me the true democracy, the people of Pennsylvania.

I see before me those who have belonged to that once powerful party, but who were compelled to leave it at different periods on account of the misdeeds of its leaders. That party, from a majority of fifty thousand in this State, is now only struggling for existence; but it must share the same fate as in New York, its strong hold, as in Virginia, Ohio, and other States; for revolutions never go backward—their movement is always onward—you might as well attempt to stay the current of our rivers or the waves of the sea. I see before me original democrats, original federalists and original Jackson men, who supported the election of Jackson, but who felt themselves bound to abandon his administration, at different periods, as its disastrous experiments were developed in succession. Some of you left him when he asserted that piratical system of the spoils of office, in its tendency so corrupting to the wholesome blood of liberty, and which created that tremendous power that is now attempting to make itself independent of the people; like the thirty tyrants of Athens, presenting the alarming spectacle of the people contending against their own servants, who aspire to be independent, by making a corrupt use of the public offices and the vast influence attached to them, in order to become our master. Some of you left Gen. Jackson when he exhibited that most disgraceful scene of wickedness and corruption, unexampled in the most degraded European courts, and

his war against the Bank of the United States, waged because he could not make it an engine of political power; and you foresaw and foretold in it the destruction of a sound currency, the derangement of trade and industry, the unlimited increase of banks and bank paper, and the harvest for shavers, brokers, money dealers and gamblers. Others left him when he removed the deposits, thus "assuming the responsibility of trampling under foot the constitution and the laws, and then spurning with contempt the thousands of petitions which were humbly laid at his feet! Others could not stand the specie circular, which opened the door to vast speculators in the public lands by the government mercenary retainers, and brought about the suspension of specie payments by the bank. There are some here who even stuck to him to the last hour, even after he had spurned the law repealing that infamous circular—a law, passed almost by a unanimous vote of both houses of Congress, and which he could not veto, excepting by this new mode of not acting on it at all. Some of you even gave your votes to elevate his successor, Martin Van Buren, but could not continue that support longer than the year. You could not approve the detestable, the audacious Sub Treasury Scheme, giving the power over the public money to the Executive by means of officers dependent on it; thus rendering the chiefs and their hirelings independent of the people, and avowing the insulting distinction of a sound currency for the public servants, and an inferior one for their masters.—Thus, the people represented by this assembly consists perhaps for the greater part of those who once sustained General Jackson and his successor, but whose better judgments, whose sad experience and love of country, will permit them to sustain them no longer. Am I wrong then in saying that you do not represent a party, but the People of Pennsylvania—no, I am not wrong, I speak the words of incontrovertible truth. There are others that are not yet with us, but they will be with us; for they will not stand the last measure of insult in the attempt to give us a Governor from Washington, and a Governor of whom every Pennsylvanian must be ashamed.

Fellow-citizens, yesterday morning, after walking some eight or ten miles in advance of the crowded boat, I stopped at a house on the side of the canal, and called for breakfast. The good woman after handing me a cup of coffee, asked the meaning of so many people repairing to Pittsburgh—"It did not used to be so," said she, "and I do not understand it." "Madam, I will explain the matter. The State of Pennsylvania has been sick, but is now well again, and is going abroad a little for the benefit of her health!" Yes, fellow-citizens, the doctor and the apothecary are dismissed, we are about to take care of ourselves, and the first thing will be to take some nourishing diet. Nay, our stomachs have become so good, and our digestion so much improved, that I believe we may even venture with safety on a dish of sour crout, with a bit of Dutch hog on the top of it. Yes, fellow-citizens, it is high time to think and act for ourselves; to look at the contents of the box, instead of being satisfied with the label on the outside, however inviting and plausible it may seem.

der to declare whether you will continue in office, your present chief magistrate, Joseph Ritner, or whether you will choose another in his place; but there is also a deep and pervading feeling, which proves that other subjects are connected with it, of greater magnitude. If Joseph Ritner has done well, why should he be rejected? Men of Pennsylvania, let us bring the claims of Joseph Ritner and David R. Porter to a summary trial; let us try them by the motto of our State, by the words on the flag which waves its azure folds over our heads, in emulation as it were, of the canopy of unclouded blue under which we are assembled, for the very heavens appear propitious to our cause. The golden words you read are Virtue, Liberty and Independence. Is there any one so bold, so regardless of decency and truth, as to question the virtue of Joseph Ritner? From a poor boy, early depending on his own exertions, he ascended with increasing honor and respect through all the gradations of society, to the highest office in the State, and this through intrinsic merit, and not as the tool of a party or party leaders, or as the sycophant of those in power. By honest industry and labor, he acquired a moderate independence, enough to satisfy a man of unambitious desires—he attained that medium between poverty and riches which Solomon himself approved, and which every man with sobriety, common prudence, ordinary good fortune, and ordinary industry, may reach in this happy land. Riches and poverty are but relative terms—one man may be poor with the wealth of a Girard, another, like Cincinnatus, may be rich with four acres of ground. Ritner, in the estimation of many, would still be regarded as a poor man, but that kind of poor man admired by the immortal Burns.

"What tho' on homely fare we dine,
Wear hoddingray, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er so poor,
Is king o' men for a' that."

Some may be a little richer than others, but no man in this country ought to be willing to be placed on the poor list who can earn an honest living. His little independence Ritner acquired by hard labor at the plough, at the loom, and by driving his wagon; but his only true riches consist in a character which stands unblemished and unimpeached to the present moment. His friends are not compelled, on his account, to cast aside all decency and shame by the disgraceful declaration that no matter how deprived he may be in private life, they will vote for him for public office for the sake of the party. But this is not all.* Let me ask whether Joseph Ritner, who was repeatedly elected to represent one of the most intelligent counties in the State in the General Assembly, and was unanimously elected to preside over that body, could be other than a man of highly improved and well stored mind, as well as possessed of weight and dignity of character? No—although self taught, his mind was well stored with knowledge from books, without the aid of college professors. He knows the value of education, and he has done more to promote that cause in this State than all our Governors put together. The life of our great Franklin, one of the most enlightened men that ever lived, shows what may be accomplished by him who desires to rise above the

Franklin and Ritner for the encouragement of the true democracy of merit, and to you, young men, farmers and mechanics, do I most especially commend them

Will any one deny the claim of Ritner to that golden word *Virtue*—virtue in private and in public life? Is not the word *Independence* applicable to him? As a statesman, we have seen him stand up for Pennsylvania when the Federal Administrations of Jackson and Van Buren attempted to encroach on her rights of sovereignty, by interference with our elections and legislative acts. If Pennsylvania chose to charter the Bank of the United States it was no business of the officers at Washington, and Ritner told them so. We might differ among ourselves as to questions of expediency, but is there any one here who will countenance the interference of the General Government in our local concerns? If there be, he has not the feelings of a Pennsylvanian. No—you are not willing to submit to foreign dictation, and neither was Joseph Ritner. And again, when the disastrous experiments on the currency terminated in its destruction and the stoppage of the banks, did not Ritner promptly issue his proclamation, warning them to resume as soon as the crisis should be passed; and the moment it was passed by the defeat of the Sub-Treasury Bill, did he not call upon them to resume? Thus proving himself independent of the Banks, of party, and of the federal corruptions of Van Buren! He has been faithful to the word *Independence*, and the glorious word *Liberty*, heaven descended *Liberty*—is not that also applicable to him in its true sense?—Can he be otherwise than the friend of *Liberty*? How can he be Joseph Ritner without being a freeman, the friend of education, the lover of the liberties of his country and of mankind? Let his whole life, private as well as public, give the answer to this question.

Now, let us turn to his competitor, David R. Porter—the son of a wealthy man, who acquired a fortune during the revolutionary war, when others spent theirs. A man who had all the opportunities of education, and who benefited but little by them, for he could not even maintain the standing of a petty attorney—a man who has been fed, and has grown rich on public money, by filling petty offices of profit—a man of no reputation for talents, and scarcely known to the people out of his own district—a man who has been only conspicuous as an intriguing politician, destitute of all political virtue, and all whose aspirations have begun and ended with self. In private life, what is he? Ah! we are told this is a subject too delicate to be touched—private character has nothing to do with political pretension! No—this is not true—the man who claims the suffrages of the people must bare his bosom to the probe—if he cannot stand it he must retire. We meddle not with the private characters of private men. The character of Porter is not even equivocal—there are those who will follow me that will be more explicit. He can lay no claim to the word *Virtue*. To the word *Liberty* in some sense he may lay claim; but it is the liberty the wolf takes with the lamb—such liberty as is shown by the man who makes free with the earnings of others—such liberty as is taken by

of the insolvent law, and comes out full handed!—Men of Pennsylvania! is your State so poor in eminent and virtuous citizens, that you can find no one to be your chief magistrate who has not been the tenant of a jail, and who does not labor under the imputation of fraudulent insolvency? Can you consent to such a degradation? Can you, without a mighty struggle support such a man to administer a government whose motto is *Virtue, Liberty and independence*? I cannot think it possible.

But there is another word by which he must be tried—the word '*independence*.' Is David R. Porter the free and spontaneous choice of Pennsylvania, or of any party in the State? No—he is the choice of the office holders at Washington, that he may be the submissive tool to do their bidding—He is nominated by them, and if elected it will be by their influence, against the wishes of the real people of Pennsylvania. It is well known with what reluctance he has been accepted by the party, the better part of which are ashamed of his private character; in general they detest the sub-treasury scheme, and yet the issue is tendered on this question, so that if, by any possibility, Porter shall be elected, Van Buren may pretend to claim the sanction of Pennsylvania for the renewal of his odious project. Nothing retains them in the support of Porter but the idea of fidelity to the party. Fidelity to party, the curse of the present day, in preference to fidelity to the country—that following of bell-wethers—were the bells shifted to the necks of wolves, still the faithful of the party would continue to follow its well-known tinklings. I call upon those adherents of Van Buren who may be in my hearing, and I conjure them, by their love of country, by their respect for virtue, by their abhorrence of the Sub-Treasury scheme, to come forth and take their station at once under this azure standard, which waves from the boughs of these trees, and on which the words *Virtue, Liberty and Independence* are inscribed in golden letters! The tree of liberty itself is in danger—not from "the tempest or the breeze," but from the canker worm of corruption at its root. But the worm will be destroyed, and the heaven descended plant will flourish again as gloriously as ever; its boughs will afford a resting place to the birds of the air, and its shade, repose and shelter to man, and to the things created for his use.

We have been too much deceived by names, by superficial, specious, and deceitful hopes and promises; by hollow professions, by false dogma, intended to produce a momentary delusion. Many of them, and their authors, whether they be agrarians, Loco Focos, or politicians by profession, or any other of those "cankers of a calm world," whose great object is to live on the earnings and industry of other citizens, have been already placed on the shelf. True democracy consists in equal laws and equal rights, protecting the sober and industrious pursuit of every one, and securing him the enjoyment of his own, under a government of his choice. From my boyhood I have been a democrat, and prefer it to any other political name, even the more ancient one of Whig, because it expresses a meaning nearer in accordance with my ideas of free government. It conveys the idea of a government emanating from the people, and established

a hereditary source for the benefit of a privileged and fortunate class, whose right to offices and honors from their very birth, is established and recognized by the laws. It conveys the idea of a government of the people; established by them for their own benefit and which they are at liberty to change, when it ceases to answer the purposes of its creation. It conveys the idea of the free choice of men as public servants responsible to the people, and removable at their pleasure when they cease to give satisfaction. Is there any of you who is not a democrat on these terms? Do you not consider it a piece of unexampled insolence in those who presume to stigmatise you with the names of federalists, aristocrats, or bankites, because you dare condemn the conduct of your public servants in office? That the term federalist, should at this day be used as a word of reproach at all, is a gross insult to the understandings of the people, by those who so use it. I may say this, who never belonged to the federal party, who have been the uniform supporter of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and even of Jackson when he began his administration, but as I could not swallow "the whole hog," he struck at me, and I kicked at him, and we were even. The name of federalist is harmless in itself, and it is only otherwise when used as a term of vague unmeaning reproach, addressed to the ears of supposed ignorance. And do you not feel indignant at this betrayal of so poor an opinion of your understandings? The term in itself only means an attachment to our federal constitution, under which the States are bound together in this glorious confederacy. If it can be applied to any one reproachfully, it is to those distinguished leaders of modern democracy, who were conspicuous in the ranks of federalism, when it had a distinct existence as a party. There is so little sense or meaning in the term at present, that I once heard a newly made citizen, who had not been long enough amongst us to be acquainted with the history of parties, say to one of our native young men, "you are a federalist, and your father was a federalist before you, in the revolutionary war."

No one will deny, that Thomas Jefferson was a democrat in theory and in practice, both in his opinions and habits. But the habits of men speak a stronger language than profession, as actions speak more than words. Let us compare his democracy with that of the chief of modern patent democracy, Mr Van Buren. When Mr Jefferson went to the capital at Washington, he rode on horse back and fastened the bridle to a post. Now, how does democratic Mr Van Buren appear abroad? After making every allowance for the progress of luxury, this democrat follows too closely in "the footsteps" of European sovereigns for my taste. He goes abroad in his coach and four, with footmen behind, postillions before, and outriders on every side! But modern democracy it may be said, has grown high minded; it is no longer the vulgar and grovelling thing it used to be; like Jack, in Swift's tale of a tub, it "mounts a high horse, and eats custard." Even that satire on the human species, Amos Kendall it is said, rides in his coach! And certes, if we may judge from some recent occurrences, which have taken place in the course of the present year, in Great British, a very wonderful change has come over the spirit of this dream of

little longer, I will relate it, although a somewhat light affair; but feathers, and straws and such things, serve to show how the wind blows; and I must confess, that our modern double refined democracy has a most marvellous squinting towards monarchy.

You all know that a splendid pageant has lately been exhibited in London, to the admiring eyes of all Europe, in the coronation of England's young and beautiful little Queen. I wish her well, and that she may reign if her people will it, and may her reign be prosperous and happy. I am an admirer of the fair sex, as far as a married man may be, and if compelled to submit to a sovereign reign, I think I should prefer a Queen, and especially such an one as Victoria is said to be. Indeed I think it fortunate we are not permitted by our constitution to elect a President for four years from that captivating sex, and with reason, for if one of our fair countrywomen were President, instead of Mr Van Buren I fear there would be little to expect against her from this gallant young men's convention. I am not so certain that I would even trust myself, I might feel like the Poet Anacreon,

"My locks are old, but my heart is young,"

and not so very old—I am only one of Dr Franklins young men of fifty. But this is not to the purpose. The pageant referred to, one so important to hereditary rank and power, displayed in the first nation of the civilized world, naturally awakened the deepest interest among all the established monarchies of Europe. Kings' sons, the highest dignitaries accompanied by the most gorgeous retinues, were deputed to take part and to assist at that important ceremony. Hitherto our Presidents, from the time of Washington, down to the present day, had shown no particular and especial interest in such displays, so little in unison with our democratic feelings and principles. They had been content to restrict our national intercourse, to such matters of business, as were necessary to establish a good understanding in our mutual trade, and in our settlement of such differences as might arise between us. But Mr Van Buren has changed all this. Why should he not send his son on a special mission, to join the throng of hereditary greatness and power, as well as other kings? And why should not his genealogy from Adam be as good as theirs? Accordingly autograph letters are made out for his eldest son, and heir apparent Mr John Van Buren! The young man repairs to London to take part in the humbug, is graciously received, and it is said that our prince John was actually paired off with the Duke de Nemours, one of the sons of the King of France, who represented his father on that brilliant occasion.

Whether this was intended as a compliment to Prince John or as a slur on the descendant of Mons. Egalite, I will not pretend to say. It has been even hinted that there was some little rivalry in the case; John being noticed in a most flattering manner by the little Queen, who invited him to take a seat beside her and tell some yankee stories! For my part, I do not think any thing very serious will grow out of this thing—there are too many obstacles in the way, and I therefore do not agree with some persons that Mr. Van Buren has had it in view to strengthen his chance of re-elec-

has been but too successful in obtaining foreign aid from another quarter. But, fellow citizens, are you not ashamed and indignant that our country should be made a laughing stock in the eyes of the world? Can you applaud the conduct of Mr. Van Buren, in sending this little democratic jackdaw to strut among the peacocks of royalty? I do not wish to speak of the young man too harshly; I am even pleased with some cleverness reported of him, which proves, that like the celebrated Gilpin, he is not without "a ready wit." When some of the sprigs of nobility attempted to pluck a feather from his tail by unseasonable inquiries about his pedigree, he is said to have replied, "I am descended from Kinderhook"—"pon honor, from Kinderhook, an Indian king, I suppose."

And this is the democracy of Mr. Van Buren! Such a democracy must be entirely new to the most of you, and yet, this is the democracy of the President of the United States, and of course of such of his followers as are near him, and who undertake to distribute the new fire of democracy from the centre to the remotest parts of the country. It was the custom among the Sunworshippers, the ancient Peruvians, once a year, to put out all their fires, which were again rekindled by fire distributed from the temple of Cusco; but now, every man kindles his own fire, on his own hearth, and it is my most earnest prayer, *that the time may come when every man in our country will kindle the fire of democracy*; and this can only be effected by education, and the general diffusion of information. My hopes are in the young men of our country—they have outgrown, and the beardless youth, just coming on, are fast outgrowing this spurious democracy, Jacksonism, Van Burenism, Bentonism, Calhounism, and all their baleful fallacies and deceptions.

Before I conclude this address, I will give you a little piece of reminiscence of the olden time, connected with the spot on which we are assembled. It will be substantially true, as to the details, there may be some embroidery. Directly in front of the spot I now occupy, in my early day, there was an open common. Instead of being covered, as it is now, by rows of houses, stores, and canal basins, the only building on it, was the Dutch Lutheran Church. But this common was the scene of the most interesting events; it was the race ground, and in early times, the races were not second in importance and animation, with every man, woman, and child, to the election contests, which are so exciting at the present day. Not far from this, a large segment of the circular path, was crossed in two places by a piece of sunken ground, in which after rains, as it happened to be the case at the period referred to, the water sometimes formed a slough. The church was inside, and not far from the foot of Grant's Hill, and near it, stood the distance pole, and sixty yards further, the starting and winning post. One of the annual races, which I shall never forget, had produced great excitement, and persons far and near repaired to witness the animating struggle. A race, at all times, has something in it peculiarly democratic; no one ever presumes to claim the purse on account of the pedigree of his horse, but because it is fairly due to his speed and bottom; it matters not whether he be out of the Flying Childers, Godolphin Arabian, or John Patterson's gray mare. Now, on the

rel mare, Bob Hays' bay horse, and several others not necessary to mention, as they either flew the course, were distanced, or broke the necks of their riders. The judges of the race were Gen. Presley Neville, General John Wilkins, and John Darragh, citizens universally esteemed for their sound judgment and high integrity. Not far from this, on one of the farms of Gen. O'Hara, there lived an honest German farmer, of the name of Nyman, whose son, a most worthy man, now keeps a livery stable in this city. Nyman, who was the owner of a faithful Conestoga wagon horse, well built and of powerful bone and muscle, bethought him of entering for the purse as well as the rest. He accordingly came forward to the judges and tendered his money, they endeavored to dissuade him—"what," said they, "enter your old wagon and farm horse, who has had no regular keeping, and has never been trained to racing." "No matter," said Nyman—"tis a free country—my horse has a right to try what he can do, so well as other horses—if he wins the purse, gute—if he lose, no matter"—So Conestoga was entered with the rest, not, however, without being subjected to some good jokes on account of his rusticity and Dutch extraction. The word go—was given, the sorrel gallantly led the way—the bay followed, Conestoga in the rear of all, until the last round of the first heat, when, to the surprise of every one, he saved his distance—the sorrel foremost, and the bay not far behind. The contest suddenly became animated—"two hundred dollars on the sorrel," shouted Wilkins—"I stand by Billy Wilky," hoarsely shouted Ned Patchell—"one hundred dollars on the bay," roared Bob Hays—no bet was offered on honest Conestoga. The second heat was again led for some time by the sorrel, but on the second round, the bay shot ahead, Conestoga gaining fast on the sorrel, so that the last that was seen of them from the winning post, (the church hiding them from view) the whole three, were not far apart; but no sooner had they re-appeared at the distance pole, than Conestoga was ahead of all, and actually came out foremost! All stood for a moment, in silent amazement—the high spirited, chivalrous Wilkins, like,

"Stout Gloster stood aghast in sleepless trance,"

many an unrecorded oath was sworn by Bob Hays, who raised aloft his double loaded whip, but no one cared to approach his ire. Some declared that Conestoga had leapt over the church, and affidavit men offered their services, but were not wanted. To shorten my story, the old wagon horse took the third heat with all ease, and the purse was awarded him. Now as I have been all my life something of a Philosopher; that is, prone to look into the causes of things, I was led to inquire how it came, that a plain old farm horse should take the purse from steeds of such high importations. You will recollect the Slough of Despond, I have described as crossing the race path; now when the regular coursers with their slender shanks had to go through the water and mud, their speed was suddenly checked, while the powerful strength of the winner carried him through with as much ease as on the level ground; he kept the even tenor of his way without any apparent increase or diminution of speed, he was the same thing when he came out as when he started. To you, young men of Pennsylvania, I now commend the moral of my story. *Cunning, like a quarter nag, may run its little race, but cannot repeat. Wisdom alone can stand the heat, can resist*

GOV. SHULZE.

AN INTERESTING AND IMPORTANT LETTER.

THE OCTOBER ELECTION.

We invite attention to the following interesting and important letter from the pen of that sturdy patriot and unwavering democrat, JOHN ANDREW SHULZE. It is in reply to a communication addressed him by a number of our most respectable citizens, and alludes, as will be perceived, to the political struggle about to take place in Pennsylvania. It cannot but produce a powerful sensation, especially among the old democrats of this Commonwealth, who twice contributed to the election of its author to the highest honor of the Key-Stone State, and who know that a citizen retired from public life and anxious only for the welfare of his country, could have no other motive than patriotism,—no other object than the “greatest good of the greatest number,” in thus deliberately expressing his sentiments upon the eve of an important political struggle. The testimony of John Andrew Shulze, at such a crisis, is indeed entitled to the consideration of every true-hearted Pennsylvanian. *He* has no personal feelings to gratify,—no mortified vanity to indulge,—no patron at Washington to fawn before and kneel to. His views are those of a fearless freeman,—a patriot who loves Pennsylvania, and is anxious for her honor, independence and prosperity. We commend the letter to general attention. It is frank, fearless and to the purpose.—Phil. Inq.

MONTGOMERY, Lycoming County, 2
August 29, 1838.

Fellow-Citizens—Before the receipt of your letter I had heard that it had been represented that I was opposed to the reelection of Governor Ritner, and I had been requested to make known my opinion. An unwillingness to obtrude myself upon public attention, and a fear that I might be thought presumptuous, prevented me from publishing my opinions in any other way than by making them known to such of my neighbors or friends as called upon me for that purpose. They all know that I have never hesitated to express a preference for Joseph Ritner over David R. Porter. I have no unkind feelings or personal unfriendliness towards Mr. Porter. I am wholly influenced in my opposition to him, by public principles. He is nominated and advocated by those who declare they have entire confidence in the principles, patriotism and talents of Mr. President Van Buren, while I have no confidence in the qualities thus attributed to Mr. Van Buren. I have never seen any evidence that Mr. Van Buren has any fixed principles, any patriotism or talents. I well remember in the war of 1812, that Mr. Van Buren was opposed to the

election of the wise, the gifted, and the patriotic James Madison, and was strongly in favor of De Witt Clinton, who was the “Peace Party” candidate. I know nothing of Mr. Van Buren calculated to inspire confidence. He has trod too exactly in the “steps of his predecessor,” and seems disposed, by his sub-treasury scheme, to dip a little deeper into the pockets of the people. If, by any possible contrivance or misrepresentation, Pennsylvania should elect Mr. Porter Governor, then would it be blazoned abroad that the people of this State were in favor of the re-election of Mr. Van Buren, and a cloud deep and dark would overshadow the now bright prospects of the democrats throughout the United States. For these and many other reasons, it shall be my pleasure, as I believe it to be my duty, to do all in my power to insure the re-election of Governor Ritner. I feel assured that the desire to sustain our good old Constitution, will bring thousands more to the polls than ever yet voted at any election, and I have entire confidence that the work of the good men of the Revolution will not be laid aside, to take up and adopt the piece of patchwork which was put together by the late generally condemned Convention. The Germans of Pennsylvania will hold fast what they know to be good. They know the honesty and straight forward policy of Joseph Ritner, and they will support him. They know he is a good Pennsylvanian, and that with economy and care, he watches over the interests of the State and the people.—They will not cast away what they have tested, what they *know* to be good, to try experiments with constitutions or with men, which may turn out to be good for nothing. My correspondence has been extensive, and my other opportunities good, and I do assure you that I have the utmost confidence in the re-election of Governor Ritner. I have said more than I intended, but perhaps not more than is necessary to give you a clear idea of the principles which influence my conduct, and give me such confident hope. This triumph will be followed by one still more important, the election of a genuine democratic President in 1840. Your letter of the 18th inst. only reached me yesterday. I have complied with your wishes, and communicated my views on the questions now agitating the State, with candor, and my entire conviction.

With much respect, I remain,

Your obedient servant,

J. ANDREW SHULZE.

To John L. Woolf, J. Washington Tyson, Joel Cook, Geo. R. Smith, Esqrs.

